

THE FIREMAN



The newsletter for alumni and friends of Gamma Theta Chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha at Mississippi State University

A Foundation for Shared Progress

PIKE CONTINUES TO DEVELOP EXCEPTIONAL BROTHERS

As an alumnus of Gamma Theta, I find myself reflecting with immense pride on the chapter's enduring legacy of excellence. Being part of this brotherhood means more than just shared memories; it signifies membership in a community that consistently strives for unparalleled achievement in every facet of student life, upholding the highest ideals of scholarship, leadership, and service.

Fraternal Accomplishments

The recent achievements of the chapter are truly a testament to this unwavering commitment. Our commitment to academic excellence remains a cornerstone, with brothers consistently achieving high GPAs and securing top spots in demanding programs. This culture of learning is paralleled only by our dedication to community engagement and service and significant involvement in campus life, where members lead numerous other student organizations.

One of the most shining examples of our collective impact is the groundbreaking success of our philanthropy efforts. In a remarkable display of dedication and brotherhood, our chapter spearheaded the inaugural Pike Diamond Classic charity baseball game that raised an astonishing \$50,000 for the Habitat for Humanity organization. This achievement not only provided critical support to a worthy cause but was also historic in that it was the first fraternity charity baseball game ever played at Mississippi State's renowned Dudy Noble Field.

The Pike Diamond Classic also set a new standard for philanthropic initiative on campus, showcasing the extraordinary power of the brotherhood united for a purpose.

Always Growing Stronger

Furthermore, the chapter's vitality is evident in its growth. We recently shattered previous records by initiating a landmark class of 53 new members, a clear indicator of the chapter's appeal to the brightest and most promising students at the university. This robust membership ensures the legacy of excellence will continue for generations to come.

My time with the chapter provided a foundation for my personal and professional life. The lessons learned, the friendships forged, and the values instilled—integrity, courage, and a commitment to making a difference—are things I carry with me daily. The chapter's continued success, from unprecedented philanthropy to academic honors and record-breaking recruitment, reinforces my belief that it is not just a fraternity but also a premier institution for developing future leaders. I am profoundly proud to be an alumnus of this chapter and look forward to continued success.

Fraternally,

Jay Cook '02

House Corporation President

jaycook@bankcom.com | (662) 418-9605



Help Us Grow the Brotherhood

We're looking for men who...

- SHOW UP
- LEAD BY EXAMPLE
- MAKE OTHERS BETTER

That's the kind of man we're looking for to join Gamma Theta.

IF YOU KNOW HIM...

SUBMIT A RECRUITMENT REFERRAL

Send a referral to one of our recruitment chairmen. Please include the student's full name, contact information, hometown, and any relation to legacy and/or active members.

Preston Cook '24

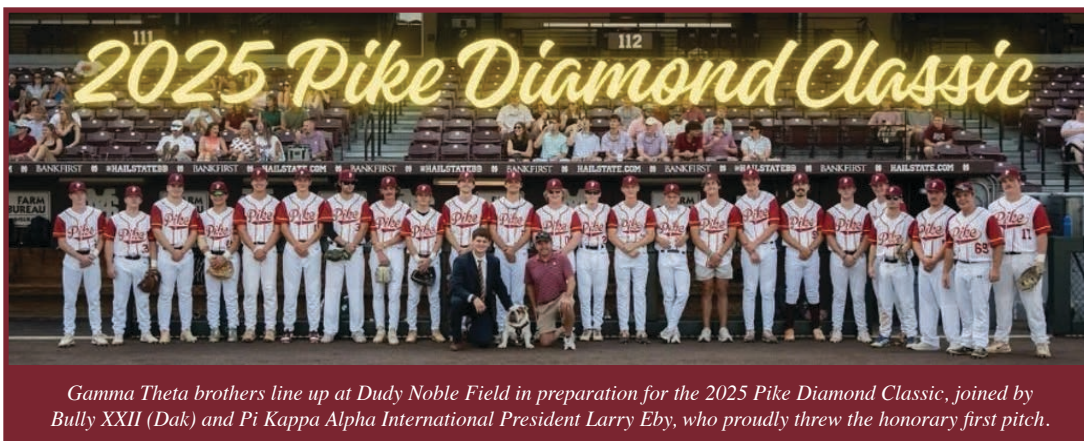
prc126@msstate.edu | (662) 871-9809

Taze Fulford '24

ctf144@msstate.edu | (662) 617-9498

Will Arbuckle '25

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Gamma Theta brothers line up at Dudy Noble Field in preparation for the 2025 Pike Diamond Classic, joined by Bully XXII (Dak) and Pi Kappa Alpha International President Larry Eby, who proudly threw the honorary first pitch.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Keegan Acord | Sylvester, Ga.
Will Arbuckle | Nashville, Tenn.
Owen Audelo | Pensacola, Fla.
Carson Ballard | Jackson, Tenn.
Graves Bayard | Baton Rouge, La.
Cameron Bell | Dexter, Mo.
Jake Birske | Germantown, Miss.
Sam Bondali | Covington, La.
Joshua Bonura | Pensacola, Fla.
Braden Bostick | Huntsville, Ala.
Matthew Cox | Houston, Texas
Brandt Dickerson | Hurley, Miss.
Dalton Dotilla | Biloxi, Miss.
Reid Elder | Brandon, Miss.
Will Fortenbury | Amite, La.
Townes Fulford | Starkville, Miss.
Bruin Gilfoil | St. Francisville, La.
Will Green | Tupelo, Miss.
Griffin Gwin | Fayetteville, Ga.
Clark Hamilton | Hernando, Miss.
Jaxon Harris | Biloxi, Miss.
William Henry | Starkville, Miss.
Caden Hogue | Georgetown, Texas
Jackson Holden | Vicksburg, Miss.
Reed Johnston | Memphis, Tenn.
Aiden Kelly | Tuscaloosa, Ala.
Cody Lents | Medina, Tenn.
Patricio Lespron | Starkville, Miss.
Vinny Malone | Lincoln Park, N.J.
Andrew Meyer | Marietta, Ga.
Turner Michel | Covington, La.
Grayson Moore | Cartersville, Ga.
Sean Odom | Meridian, Miss.
Tucker Payne | Gulfport, Miss.
Jax Petrouski | Collierville, Tenn.
Zane Pike | Somerville, Tenn.
Ethan Polk | Gulfport, Miss.
John Robert | Sikeston, Mo.
Dawson Rousse | Hernando, Miss.
Thomas Salmon | Orlando, Fla.
Wesley Sanders | Gulfport, Miss.
Jennings Scott | Poplarville, Miss.
Tanner Shockey | Murfreesboro, Tenn.
Andrew Swan | Pensacola, Fla.
Brooks Via | Crockett, Tenn.
Micheal Ward | Collierville, Tenn.
Win Wardlaw | Tupelo, Miss.
CJ Watson | Meridian, Miss.
Zachary Wells | Memphis, Tenn.
Aiden Williams | Hattiesburg, Miss.
Casey Young | Pensacola, Fla.



Members gather on the front lawn to celebrate Bid Day, welcoming a new class into Pi Kappa Alpha.

WE ASKED NEW MEMBERS...

WHY THEY JOINED

Townes Fulford

"I wanted to be part of a brotherhood that pushes me to grow personally and professionally. PIKE offers countless opportunities to get involved on campus, give back to the community, and build lifelong connections. Most importantly, I knew joining PIKE would challenge me to become the best version of myself and create memories that will last long after college."

Reed Johnston

"I decided to join because of the strong sense of brotherhood and leadership it creates. My brother's PIKE experiences showed me the positive impact the fraternity can have. The genuine friendships and support system I've witnessed have made it clear that PIKE is more than just a fraternity—it's a lifelong network of men who push each other to be their best, and I'm excited to contribute to that same culture of excellence and brotherhood."

Patricio Lespron

"I wanted to surround myself with people who push me to grow and help me become the best version of myself. From the beginning, I saw PIKE was built on strong values of leadership, integrity, and brotherhood, and that really stood out to me. Joining PIKE gave me the opportunity to form lasting friendships and be part of a true brotherhood that supports one another through anything."

CHAPTER GOALS

Strengthen Alumni Engagement

Foster lifelong brotherhood and strengthen the bond between active members and alumni through consistent communication and involvement.

Increase Philanthropic Impact

Build upon Gamma Theta's strong philanthropic foundation by expanding outreach, participation, and total contributions to charitable causes.

Develop Emerging Leaders

Cultivate the next generation of leaders within Gamma Theta and the greater Mississippi State community.

A Proud Pike Coach

Louis Nash '75 on Fraternity Memories, Hall of Fame Inductions



"I have zero bad memories of my time as a Pike at Mississippi State."

When Louis Nash '75 arrived at Mississippi State, he was a naïve young man looking for new friends on a

large campus. Gamma Theta Chapter welcomed him with open arms, and Louis embraced the brotherhood that helped shape his growth for a career in coaching.

A Culture of Camaraderie

"The fraternity, to me, was just like an athletic team," he said. Louis has countless fond memories from his PIKE days, especially winning the fraternity flag football championship with his brothers. "We were bonded together, working for a common purpose of individual and group success, good times and bad, living and learning together—a teammate you will have forever."

Shortly after moving into the PIKE house, Louis took on coaching positions for Gamma Theta's top intramural teams. He had his sights set on a coaching career in Mississippi, and Pi Kappa Alpha gave him a foundation to build his leadership skills.

"For four years, I was sort of the athletic director for the guys, and we put a huge emphasis on participation in all intramural activities. We won the overall campus points trophy a couple times and were fortunate to have some very talented athletes in the fraternity during that time."

Learning to Lead

Louis earned a physical education degree from Mississippi State after prior experience as an athletic trainer for his high school's athletic teams. Though his original NBA career aspirations didn't pan out due to his height, he enjoyed working alongside exceptional athletes and coaches during his younger years.

After college, Louis became a teacher and girls' basketball coach at Watkins High School in Laurel. He later coached cross country, tennis, and boys' basketball while running the city-wide community tennis association.

"I went from Laurel to Greenville St. Joseph to coach, teach, administrate, and then to Oxford for the past 25 years doing the same," he said. "The common denominator at each school was that we had tremendous talent in our tennis programs!"

Coaching Accomplishments

Throughout his career, Louis was recognized as a STAR teacher while leading Laurel tennis teams to numerous Big Eight championships, St. Joseph teams to five state championships, and the Oxford High squad to 10 state championships. With a remarkable 600-69 dual match team coaching record, Louis earned two Tennis Coach of the Year awards from the Mississippi Association of Coaches (MAC) along with various other accolades.

"Joy came for me from times either teaching, coaching, or counseling hundreds of beautiful children throughout a 40-plus-year career."

Louis was inducted into the Mississippi Tennis Hall of Fame in 2023, and several Pikes recently gathered to attend his MAC Hall of Fame induction ceremony. He appreciated **John Causey '71** reserving a table for brothers to attend the 2023 ceremony, and many more embraced the 2025 ceremony as an impromptu PIKE reunion.

"Seeing guys I have not seen in more than 40 years was a beautiful thing. They had an awesome time with one another and developed plans for future gatherings... Those who continue in the work and support of Pi Kappa Alpha have my heartfelt respect and gratitude for keeping the brotherhood alive."

Louis and his wife, Rose, are both retired teachers who recently relocated to Minnesota. They have a son and daughter who played tennis in Oxford and won state championships before their collegiate careers. You can connect with Louis at louisnash@outlook.com.

ALUMNI NEWS

Wade Finger '62 enjoys life in San Diego, Calif. He served as a Navy pilot for eight years. Email: wjayfinger@hotmail.com

Gordon Gibson '65 is an ordained minister in the Community of Christ Church in Mobile, Ala. He resides in Moss Point, Miss. Email: wayneg9946@gmail.com

George Marx '67 finished writing a book, *Starlit Nights and Frosty Morns – a Lifetime with Hunting Dogs*. The 23rd chapter is entitled "Ducks, Pikes, and Popa Duck Lodge." George lives in Hazlehurst, Miss. Email: georgemarx1947@gmail.com

Wes Smith '75 resides in Brandon, Miss. He extends a heartfelt congratulations to Gamma Theta Chapter for its recent fraternal success. Email: mktmixms@gmail.com

Michael Bishop '76 is a retired high school teacher and coach living in Sheffield, Ala. Michael also retired as a colonel from the Army Reserve, and he served one year during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003-04. He now teaches part-time at Northwest Shoals Junior College. Email: msbulldog77@yahoo.com

Rick Tubertini '79 lives in Biloxi, Miss. He enjoys traveling with his wife and looks forward to their upcoming Greece trip. Rick also spends plenty of time with family, including fun activities with his grandchildren and working alongside his daughter. Email: rick.tubertini@gmail.com

David McCullen '82 resides in Hattiesburg, Miss. He is the chief lending officer for the Community Bank of Mississippi's Pine Belt Region and looks forward to retiring in the coming years.

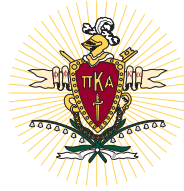
Kevin Maloney '00 welcomed his second son, Elliott, in June 2025. He works with the Tennessee Titans on its radio team as the talent statistician. Kevin lives in Ellisville, Miss. Email: kevinmaloney81@gmail.com

SUPPORT GAMMA THETA THIS FALL

Alumni donations are a vital part of Gamma Theta Chapter's ongoing success at Mississippi State. Gifts to our annual fund help us send brothers to PIKE University leadership conferences, provide scholarships for our undergraduates, and take care of chapter house maintenance and renovations.



You can contribute today by scanning the QR code to visit pikes.org/SupportGammaTheta.



THE FIREMAN STATE

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PIKE'S PRODUCTIVE FALL

Chapter Highlights and Individual Success

Gamma Theta Chapter continues to demonstrate excellence in leadership, philanthropy, and campus involvement throughout the fall 2025 semester.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

One of the semester's standout achievements was hosting the 2025 Pike Diamond Classic at Dudy Noble Field, home of the Mississippi State Bulldogs. The event united alumni, students, and the Starkville community for a memorable day of baseball and brotherhood. Playing a full seven-inning game against Sigma Chi, the chapter raised nearly \$50,000 for Habitat for Humanity. This remarkable contribution stands among the largest philanthropic efforts in Gamma Theta's history and will help fund housing projects for families in need within the local community.

Brothers also continue to excel in leadership and individual achievement. **Sam Wilkerson '22** earned national recognition by finishing in the top 1% of all participants at the Army ROTC Advanced Camp held at Fort Knox. Competing against more than 5,800 candidates during a rigorous 36-day training and evaluation program, Wilkerson's accomplishment reflects the discipline and leadership values that define our chapter's alumni.

CAMPUS LEADERSHIP

Within the Greek community, Gamma Thetas are leading the way on campus. **Logan Miller '23** was elected Interfraternity Council director of recruitment, where he will oversee recruitment efforts across all IFC fraternities. **Jackson Root '24** was selected as IFC director of outreach, responsible for strengthening communication and collaboration among fraternities, campus organizations, and university leadership.



Taze Fulford '24 proudly walks the red carpet at the St. Jude 2025 Prom, celebrating his strength and his continued support for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. His resilience and positive spirit serve as an inspiration to the entire chapter and Mississippi State community.

Additionally, **Jackson Warmath '23** and **Aidan Williams '25** were selected as Maroon VIPs, one of Mississippi State's most distinguished student ambassador programs. Their service as campus representatives exemplifies the chapter's commitment to excellence, involvement, and professionalism.

As the semester concludes, Gamma Theta Chapter remains committed to fostering brotherhood, serving the community, and developing well-rounded leaders who embody the ideals of scholars, leaders, athletes, and gentlemen.

Fraternally,
Hastings Saffle '23
President